PIECING TOGETHER 'APOCALYPSE NOW'

Camera Consciousness

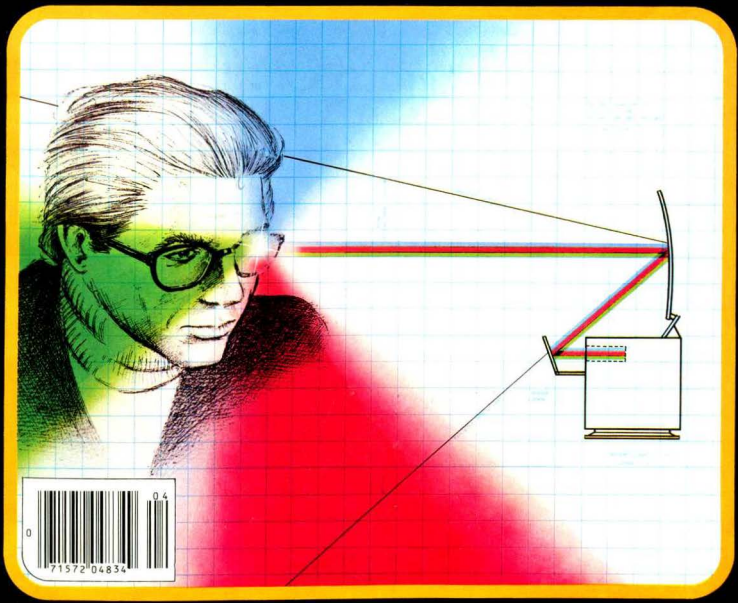
video

APRIL
$1.50
DELL 04834

The #1 Magazine Of Home Video

Shopping For Blank Tape ● Video In Vegas
TV With Snob Appeal ● Superman Flies Onto Your Screen ● Critic Andrew Sarris Re-Views Movies In The Video Era ● Berger-Braithwaite Videotests

A Close-Up Look At Projection TV



0 71572 04834 04

April, Nineteen Hundred and Eighty Volume Four, Number One

video

Editor
Bruce Apar

Managing Editor
Daniel Shannon

Associate Editor
Martin Polon

Senior Technical Editor
Ivan Berger

Technical Editor
Lancelot Braithwaite

Programming Editor
Ken Winslow

Technological Arts Editor
Paul Holman

VideoGram Editor
Susan March

Copy Editor
Amy Rich

Editorial Assistant
Lily Schwartzberg

Contributing Editors
Bruce Berman
Robert Gerson
Gary Jitt
Arnie Katz
Charlene Komar
Bill Kunkel
Frank Laney
Michael Mascioni
James Roman
Jane Wollman
Joyce Worley

Art Director
Harvey Hersh

Art Assistant
Andrew Wong

Graphic Consultants
Creative Concepts

Publisher
Jay Rosenfield

Co-Publisher
Bruce Apar

Promotion Director
Rena Adler

Staff Assistant
Velma Rivera

National Advertising Director
Bruce Mishkin
235 Park Ave. South
New York, NY 10003
(212)777-0800

West Coast
Advertising Repesentative
Bill Slapin & Co.
15720 Ventura Blvd.
Encino, CA 91436
(213) 995-0257

Circulation Director
Max Wolff

Marketing Director
Tom Koger

Business Manager
Janette Evans

Assistant to the Publisher
Joyce Davis

ABOUT OUR COVER
Projection TV is the most visible but often least understood of the new wave of home video gear. This month's cover illustrates with simple but strong strokes how a color video image is sent from the picture tube through a series of optics and magnified dramatically, evoking an almost hypnotic sensory response in the viewer.
Original art by Gary Smith.

VIDEO MANUAL

A Close-Up Look at Projection TV 32
by the Editors of VIDEO
What goes into a $4,000 big-screen system that isn't in a $1,000 model? Learn about lumens and gain valuable insight into the wonder of the widescreen, video framework of the future.

Piecing Together 'Apocalypse Now' 26
by Bruce Berman
Richard Marks, the man who did the final editing on Francis Coppola's surreal Vietnam War saga says, in this exclusive interview, that the epic film would not have been the same without the aid of video.

The Underwritten Rule of Public TV 38
by James Roman
We call it public TV, but how many of us realize the enormous influence our biggest corporate powers wield in setting the standards for much of public television's content and style.

TV With 'Snob Appeal' 50
by Lloyd Trufelman
There is evolving a rare breed of video program that appeals only to a small, highly defined audience, whose tastes often run to the esoteric and avant garde, tempered by a dose of traditional but high-minded artistic styles.

A Film Critic in Videoland 29
by Andrew Sarris

How to Shop for Blank Tape 34
by Jane Wollman

Bringing Home the Olympics: The Russian Connection 46
by Martin Polon

The Video Environment: 'Home is Where the Art Is' 60

Video Programming Guide 22
edited by Ken Winslow

VideoTests by Berger-Braithwaite Labs 54
Ivan Berger & Lancelot Braithwaite
Akai ActiVideo Portable VCR — *JVC Vidstar 6-Hr VCR*
Sampo TV — *APF Imagination Machine Home Computer*

COLUMNS

CHANNEL ONE *What's Wrong with this Picture?* ..... **Bruce Apar 6**
TELEVIEWS *Best of the New Bunker, Benson & Buck* ..... **Arnie Katz 12**
VIDEO PROGRAMMER *The Musical Question: Will it Play on the Tube?* ..... **Ken Winslow 14**
AUDIO INTO VIDEO *Hitching a Ride on the Airwaves* ..... **Martin Polon 16**
ARCADE ALLEY *Atari's New Game is Super, Man* ..... **Bill Kunkel & Frank Laney 18**
VIDEOGRAM *News Information from the World of Video* ..... **Susan March 20**
TV DEN *The Mind's Eye: Editing Through the Camera* ..... **Bernard Falkoff 30**
FINE TUNING *Getting a Fix on TV Set Repairs* ..... **Stan Prentiss 62**

DEPARTMENTS

FEEDBACK VIDEO *Readers Air their Views* **8**
NEW PRODUCTS *A Special Report from Las Vegas* **36**
VIDEOVIEWS *Critiques of Available Programs* **64**

VIDEO is published monthly, plus Buyer's Guide, by Reese Publishing Company, Inc., 235 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10003. Single copy price $1.50 (1981 Buyer's Guide issue $2.95). One-year subscription (12 issues) $18.00. Second-class postage rates paid at N.Y., N.Y. and additional mailing offices. ©1980 by Reese Publishing Company, Inc. All rights reserved. © under Universal, International and Pan American Copyright Conventions. Reproduction of the editorial or pictorial content in any manner is prohibited. All material listed in this magazine is subject to manufacturer's change without notice, and the publisher assumes no responsibility for such changes. Printed in the U.S.A.

ISSN 0147-8907

Photo credits: pages 29, 34-35, 46-47—Les Morsillo

Arcade Alley

A Critical Look at Video Cartridge Games & Programs

by Bill Kunkel & Frank Laney

Faster Than A Bullet

Atari's Super Game

The Atari Video Computer System is not quite up to home videogame state-of-the-art in its technology, but there's no doubting its popularity. Atari is making the top programmable arcade in the under-$400 market.

There's also no denying that the company has won its current leadership position by defeating some fierce competition. Several games boast greater computing power, a couple are more attractively designed and at least one, Bally, features more vibrant color graphics than Atari.

Still, it is Atari that has acquired the reputation as the arcade addict's first choice. The reason: Atari makes more, and on the whole, better game software than any of its rivals.

Atari's games have a distinctive look and style that veteran players instantly recognize. Typically, the cartridges are easy to learn, but challenging to master. This results in videogames which can be played again and again without going stale.

Versatility is another big plus. With its line of 30 cartridges, Atari offers more different games than any other company. The availability of four controllers assures that game mechanics vary from cartridge to cartridge instead of falling into a repetitive pattern.

Another prime contributor to Atari's success is the presence of so many solitaire games in its software selection. You can play a few hard-fought games against the machine even when you can't dig up a human foe.

Accordingly, the proprietors of "Arcade Alley" have decided it's high time to examine some of the games Atari has introduced since our first look at the company's system last year.

Superman (CX2631) ushers in an exciting new era for home arcades. One round will convince any player that always-innovative Atari has done it again.

Put simply, there's no other videogame remotely similar to this one. The only possible comparison might be to the complex simulations that have entertained computer freaks for the last decade or so.

This solitaire game casts the player as Superman patrolling the city of Metropolis. When the on-screen character flies, runs or walks off the screen, the machine shifts to a view of an appropriate city block. In addition, four subway stations lead to an underground network that helps Superman crisscross the city fast as he fights for truth, justice and the American way.

Players begin the game by flying Superman to the phone booth where changes to Clark Kent. When he approaches the Metropolis Bridge cloaked in his secret identity, he sees disaster strike! A squad of nasties led by Lex Luthor blows the bridge to smithereens and then escapes, the foul deed complete.

Superman's mission: round up Luthor and his five henchmen one by one, cart them off to jail and then reassemble the bridge. The job done, Superman must return to the phone booth, change to Kent and walk over to the *Daily Planet* to file his story. A timer ticks off the seconds to give players a gauge of their performance as a superhero.

Four kryptonite satellites launched by Luthor to seek out and weaken the man of steel complicate the task. There must be a romantic in the Atari game design department, since Superman can only regain his powers after he's zapped by the satellite by touching Lois Lane . . . (Fortunately for our hero, not to mention the nerves of harrassed players, Lois pops up automatically in the game every time Superman is attacked by a satellite.)

As if all this weren't enough, a pesky little helicopter zips overhead, trying its best to help Superman. More often, though, it just gets in his way by removing pieces of the Metropolis Bridge before the caped crusader can get it reassembled.

When you think you've got the superhero business down pat, Atari has two devilish options waiting in the wings. One doubles the speed of all crooks and satellites, though they don't achieve the rate of a speeding bullet, while the other removes the advantage of having Lois Lane pop up instantly to restore Superman's powers. These two variants will more than double the time it takes to successfully carry out a mission.

Strategy hints aren't as easy to formulate for this cartridge as for some of the more straightforward ones like *Breakout* or *Surround.* Players won't need super dexterity to win, but a super memory for visual landmarks is a terrific asset. A rudimentary knowledge of the Metropolis subway system, for example, sharply cuts the time spent flying on patrol. This, in turn, reduces Superman's exposure to those dangerous kryptonite meteors, increasing the odds that he will get a crook settled behind bars without interference.

A place in the Video Arcade Hall of Fame seems assured for this exciting new game cartridge. All the true arcade addict could desire would be several more along the same lines.

Bowling (CX2628) is an enjoyable version of a sport that is perfectly suited to the video arcade format. Atari's entry offers a long horizontal lane with a cartoon bowler that can be moved vertically for aiming the shot. Three different ball formats are available: straight, curve (the player can alter the ball's direction just once) and steerable (the player controls the ball during its entire roll down the alley). The curve is the most realistic, but the somewhat jaded residents of "Arcade Alley" have gravitated toward the steerable.

Complete automatic on-screen scoring is one of the game's best points. The section at the top of the playfield not only shows the frame-by-frame line score, but indicates whether the bowler has made a strike, spare or suffered an open frame each round. And as in real bowling, the player who gets a strike or spare in the 10th frame is awarded the appropriate number of bonus rolls.

Deft animation greatly enhances the

(continued on page 76)

Bill Kunkel is a New York-based writer and veteran video game addict. He shares his mania with Frank Laney, another New York freelancer.

Arcade Alley

continued from page 18

game while supplying a realistic touch. Whenever the on-screen bowler knocks down all the pins, he jumps into the air with a victory dance. When you've got the little bowler doing a jig in every frame, it's time to use the difficulty option which results in a lot more heartbreaking splits.

One way to improve this solitaire or two-player game would be to add a little on-screen beer dispenser.

Purists may claim that **Miniature Golf** (CX2626) doesn't faithfully imitate the real sport, but most arcade addicts will be having too good a time with it to care. This intriguing game of obstacles and angles combines elements of billiards, bumper pool and miniature golf to create a challenging game for one or two players.

The nine-hole course places a wide array of stationary and moving obstacles in front of would-be Arnold Palmers. Players use the joystick controller to position the square clubhead for each shot.

The club's angle to and distance from the ball determine the direction and force of the stroke. A good hard shot may result in a hole-in-one or it can send the ball careening wildly around the green, leaving the golfer even further off the mark than when started.

Video Chess (CX2645) is a reward for Atari owners who have thus far resisted the lure of stand-alone computerized chessplayers. The cartridge, which sells for $40 instead of the $20 tag on most other Atari software, can give even the best player a challenge.

Video Chess offers eight levels of play, including one designed to help beginners learn the basic rules. The difference among levels is that the computer gets progressively more time to develop its move. The game responds within 10 seconds at level 1, but the machine is allowed to ponder for up to 10 *hours* per move at level 7.

Mastering play mechanics is easy. The player uses the joystick to position over the piece he desires to move. After pushing the red button to engage the mechanism, the player guides the piece to its new square.

Atari *Video Chess* even has some features that aren't found on all the stand-alone units. It castles and captures *en passant,* and it won't let the human player blunder into an illegal move.

Surprisingly, Atari left out one variation which would have been very useful. There is no provision for using *Video Chess* with two human players letting it simply replace a regular set of chessmen and board.

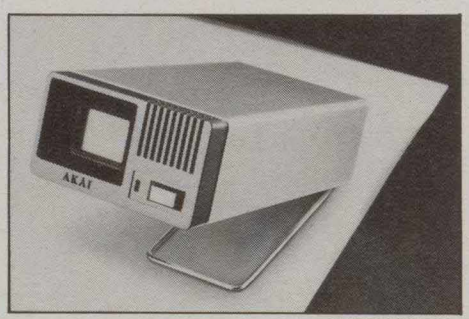
That aside, *Video Chess* is a game that even the lowliest pawn pusher should find rewarding for many hours of enjoyment.

VIDEO IN VEGAS:

Earlier this year, most of the major companies selling home video goods gathered in Las Vegas to take part in an international business exposition called the Consumer Electronics Show. This is the semi-annual event at which new products are unveiled for the first time and some prototypes (products still being developed for the future) are exhibited to test reaction from the industry. This year, there were few dramatic improvements in evidence. Most of the new items were simply variations on previously available recorders and cameras. The most obvious trend among VCRs is the addition of special effects features such as slow and fast motion, and stop-action playback modes. Lighter weight portables and color cameras also drew attention.

RCA VCR

MAXELL CASSETTES



AKAI MONITOR

ATARI ACCESSORIES

MAGNAVOX VCR

PANASONIC VCR

RCA SPECIAL EFFECT VCR

A three-speed, six-hour VHS model from RCA features special effects such as stop action, frame advance and slow or fast motion, all through a remote control panel. The Model VDT 625 is programmable and sells for $1,395.

To receive further manufacturer's information, circle No. 43 on Reader Service Card.

AKAI MINI MONITOR

Akai's "Peek-A-View" is a 1½" black/-and-white TV monitor for use with its portable VHS system, and has a pause control.

To receive further manufacturer's information, circle No. 44 on Reader Service Card.

ATARI COMPUTER ACCESSORIES

Atari's 830 is an Acoustic Modem for use with its Model 400 or 800 personal computer. It can be used with the 850 Interface Module to access information via the telephone from other Atari, or any brand, computers, data banks, as well as teletype and wire services.

To receive further manufacturer's information, circle No. 45 on Reader Service Card.

MAXELL VIDEOCASSETTES

Add Maxell to the list of blank tape brands offering videocassettes in the Beta and VHS formats. Designed for use with the newer three-speed models, the VHS tapes come in four lengths: HG 30 (min.), $18.95; HG 60, $21.95; HG 90, $25.95; HG 120, $29.95. Beta lengths are L-250, $16.95; L-500, $22.50.

To receive further manufacturer's information, circle No. 46 on Reader Service Card.

MAGNAVOX SPECIAL EFFECTS VCR

The Magnavox "Studio 6" (Model 8229) VHS recorder is a 7-day programmable with the same special effects features found in the RCA VDT-625, including remote control operation of special effects, pause and channel tuning.

To receive further manufacturer's information, circle No. 47 on Reader Service Card.

JVC COLOR CAMERA

JVC's GX-77U color camera operates in an ordinary mode, for distances 4.3 feet and further from the subject, and in a macro mode, for close-up shots within 1-in. of the subject. Other features are 5:1 power zoom lens and optical viewfinder, switchable filter and auto iris.

To receive further manufacturer's information, circle No. 47 on Reader Service Card.

SONY BETAMAX SL-5600

A two-week timer able to program up to four TV shows and BetaScan are included in the Sony Betamax SL-5600 recorder. BetaScan, also on the SL-5600 Betamax, allows visible search in forward or reverse up to 13 times normal speed, plus still frame viewing. An electronic signal at the start of each record segment enables easier location of a certain point on the tape. Microprocessor controls eliminate the need to go to STOP when switching from one function to another. Also featured is 3X fast play and playback in the original Beta I speed. Price, $1,350.

To receive further manufacturer's information, circle No. 49 on Reader Service Card.

PANASONIC SPECIAL EFFECTS PORTABLE

Still-frame and frame advance are featured in Panasonic's PV-3200